Minister's Annual Report on **Drinking Water**

2013

Ontario

MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT ON DRINKING WATER 2013

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For more information:
www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater

Minister's **Message**

Water is the key to life itself, and Ontario is fortunate to be shaped by the world's largest supply of surface fresh water — the Great Lakes. Many of our cities and towns were established on the shorelines and waterways of the Great Lakes where they could grow and flourish. More than 80 per cent of the people in Ontario rely on the Great Lakes for their drinking water. The Great Lakes drive our economy and help provide for Ontario's high quality of life through recreation, enjoyment and opportunities to connect with nature. Protecting the Great Lakes is a priority for my ministry. This report highlights our efforts to protect the Great Lakes.

As our population grows along with our economy, so do the demands on our water resources. The value of our water cannot be overlooked or taken for granted. Many municipal, private and public partnerships share our concern, and collaborate with my ministry and our many partners to protect the local water supply. I am pleased to report that we are getting results.

Much of what we have accomplished is a result of continuing collaboration with municipalities, owners and operators of drinking water systems, conservation authorities, First Nations, academics, source protection committees and community stakeholder groups. Some of their stories are contained in this report.

We have recently committed $13.5 million over the next three years to help communities to deliver local drinking water source protection plans. My ministry continues to support communities and partners as they prepare to implement these plans to protect local drinking water.

Our Chief Drinking Water Inspector's latest report confirms that Ontario's drinking water safety net is working. Our safety net helps to ensure Ontario's drinking water is protected, from source to tap. In addition to regular inspections and constant water monitoring, we are also working on innovative ways to maintain the safety of our drinking water as demands increase.

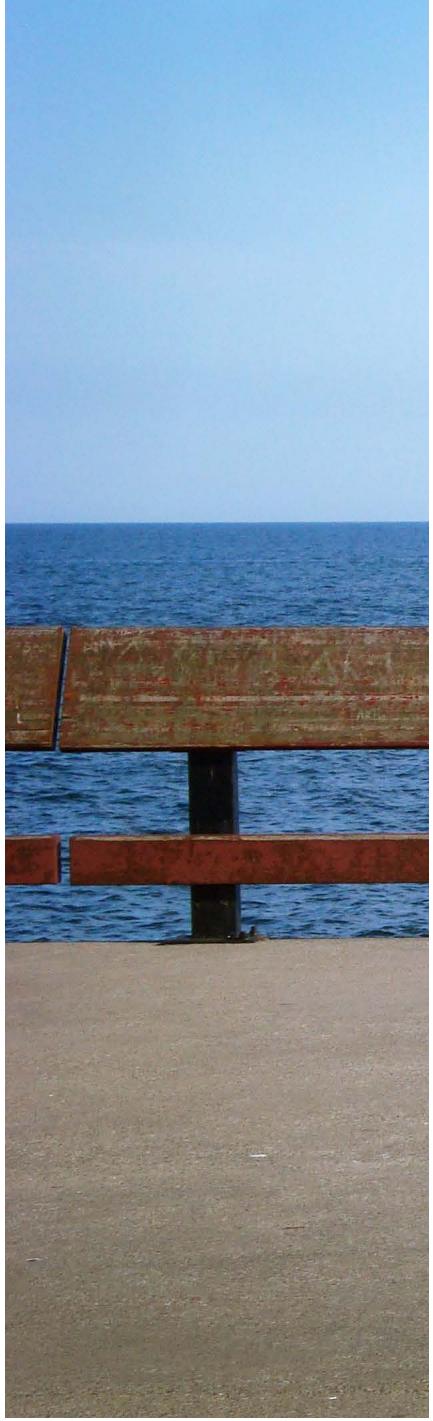
This year's report includes progress we have made under the Water Opportunities Act. For example, we established the Water Technology Acceleration Project, also known as WaterTAP. WaterTAP's focus is the growth of Ontario's highly skilled water technology and services sector. Complementing the Water Opportunities Act is our Showcasing Water Innovation program which fosters innovative and cost-effective solutions for managing water systems in Ontario communities.

We have achieved much over the past year and our work is ongoing. Regular testing using the best science and innovation are the keys to maintaining Ontario's high drinking water standards.

I look forward to working with all of our partners to continue to provide the people of Ontario with clean, safe drinking water.

The Honourable Jim Bradley
Minister of the Environment
Government of Ontario
December 2013

Status of **Drinking Water** in **Ontario**

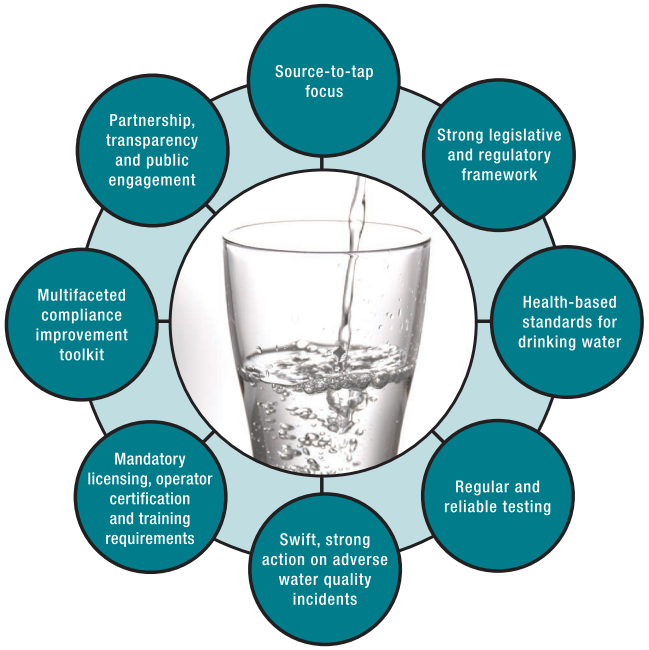


This section of the report provides an overview of the performance of Ontario's drinking water systems as reported in **Ontario's Chief Drinking Water Inspector's 2011-2012 report**. It includes statistics on drinking water quality, inspection results and information on the ministry's enforcement activities.

Ontario's Drinking Water Safety Net

The Ministry of the Environment has been collecting and carefully examining data related to your drinking water and reporting it to the public since 2005. We believe that effective drinking water protection starts at the source and continues until you turn on your tap. This is Ontario's drinking water safety net. This multi-barrier system includes strong legislation, stringent standards, regular and reliable testing, highly trained and licensed operators, regular inspections and the most comprehensive source protection program in Canada.

Figure 1: Ontario's Drinking Water Safety Net



The eight parts of the safety net are in place to help ensure that Ontario's drinking water is of high quality and remains among the best protected in the world.

Strong Legislation and Regulatory Framework

Adopted in the aftermath of the drinking water tragedy in Walkerton, the Clean Water Act helps to ensure that communities are able to protect their drinking water sources. Source water protection is the first step in Ontario's approach to delivering safe drinking water. Under the act, 19 locally-based source protection committees developed science-based source protection plans to protect the safety and sustainability of municipal drinking water resources.

These plans were based on assessments of activities and land uses that could pose a risk to the quality and quantity of raw water sources. Consultations with the public, stakeholders and First Nations were built into the source protection planning process.

All plans have been submitted and the Lakehead Source Protection Plan for the Thunder Bay area was approved in January 2013. Ministry staff are currently reviewing the remaining plans which will be implemented through a collaborative effort involving municipalities, conservation authorities, landowners and provincial ministries.

To support the implementation of the source protection plans, my ministry has trained 160 risk management officials and inspectors as of September 30, 2013. We will continue to support conservation authorities as they work with local partners and municipalities to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Once all plans are in place, they will help to protect more than 450 drinking water sources — both groundwater and surface water.

Operator Certification and Training

Ontario's drinking water operators are among the best trained in the world. To become certified, operators must complete rigorous training, write examinations and meet continuing education requirements to renew and maintain their certification.

Drinking water operators are certified and trained according to the type and class of facility they operate. They may hold multiple certificates if they work in more than one type of drinking water system. As of March 31, 2013, 6,340 operators held a total of 8,775 certificates.

A new operator starts as an operator-in-training. In 2012-13, 1,231 drinking water operator-in-training certificates were issued to 719 individuals in the province including those from First Nations communities.

The Walkerton Clean Water Centre

The Walkerton Clean Water Centre provides high quality operator training programs. They deliver province-wide training with a focus on small and remote drinking water systems including those serving First Nations. The Centre offers hands-on and classroom training as well as technology demonstrations in their state-of-the-art facility.

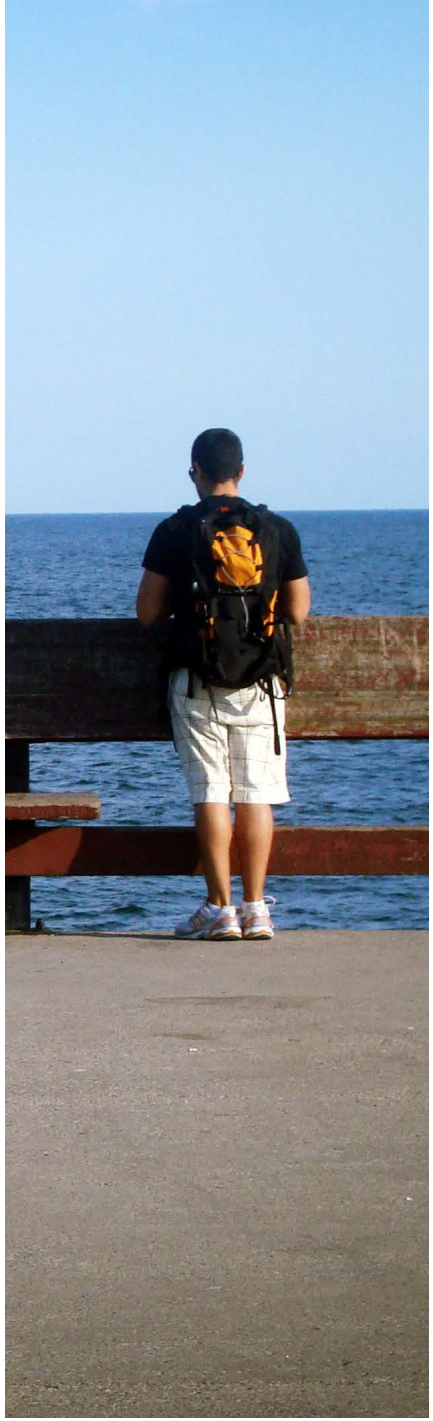
As of September 30, 2013, 45,751 new and existing professionals have been trained by the Centre.

For more information about the Walkerton Clean Water Centre and the programs offered, visit **www.wcwc.ca**.

Drinking Water Safety

My ministry works with owners and operators of drinking water systems to help ensure they meet all regulatory requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act so Ontario's drinking water continues to be among the best protected in the world.

The act protects public health through regulations that oversee many of the safeguards and measures that make up Ontario's drinking water safety net. These regulations cover licensing and operation of drinking water systems, regular and reliable testing services, drinking water quality standards, certification of drinking water system operators and compliance and enforcement activities.



FIRST NATIONS

My ministry continues to support First Nations communities and, at their request, has provided valuable support in several areas related to drinking water.

The federal government has jurisdiction over on-reserve drinking water systems in Ontario. My ministry encourages operators for First Nations communities to achieve provincial certification and provides training through the Walkerton Clean Water Centre.

The Canada-Ontario First Nations Drinking Water Quality Improvement Initiative that was launched in July 2011 is designed to help First Nations improve their drinking water quality using innovative approaches and technologies. While the federal government is providing a total of $5 million to fund this collaborative work, the province and the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation are providing technical support and training.

As I reported to you in 2012, the four participating First Nations communities of Zhiibaahaasing, Lac Seul, Munsee-Delaware and Alderville are currently leading the process of commissioning appropriate design and technology solutions for their communities.

Steady progress is being made. The construction of the new treatment plant for Zhiibaahaasing, on the west side of Manitoulin Island, is now complete and work on individual cisterns in this community has begun.

The construction work in Lac Seul, just northwest of Sioux Lookout, is now in progress, and the contract for the construction of the treatment plant in Munsee-Delaware has been awarded. Currently, the Alderville community in collaboration with other stakeholders and partners is finalizing its Request for Proposal to begin the construction work.

Next steps include the completion of current construction projects, commissioning and monitoring of all four projects and providing customized training for each community.

Drinking Water Standards

Ontario has 158 health-based water quality standards for testing the province's drinking water.

Ontario's health-based drinking water quality standards set limits for contaminants in drinking water. Most of these standards are based on Health Canada's Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines which are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect new information as it becomes available.

Ontario's Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality and Testing Standards continues to provide advice to my ministry on the most up-to-date practices and technologies related to drinking water.

Monitoring the Quality of Ontario's Source Water

The Drinking Water Surveillance Program has been monitoring the quality of Ontario's source water and treated drinking water since 1986. The program monitors emerging contaminants such as algal toxins and perfluorinated compounds. A number of municipalities and First Nations communities participate voluntarily in the program.

Another key step in protecting the safety of Ontario's drinking water is monitoring the water quality in the Great Lakes, inland lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater across the province.

Monitoring helps us understand the state of our water resources, the impacts of human activities and helps identify emerging problems. The scientific information from monitoring is used to develop new protection measures and to track and report on our progress in protecting and improving our water resources.

The results of our monitoring efforts can be found in the **Water Quality in Ontario Report 2012**.

Ontario's **Drinking Water** Report Card

Drinking Water Quality Test Results

To learn more about the Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Annual Report 2011-2012, please visit **www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater**.

Ontario's drinking water is regularly tested by qualified and eligible laboratories. They perform detailed analyses of drinking water samples that are submitted by system owners and operators. In 2011-12, these laboratories reported 653,670 test results to my ministry.

In 2011-12

- **99.87** per cent of test results from municipal residential drinking water systems met our strict health-based quality standards — this number continues to be consistently high.
- **99.45** per cent of test results from non-municipal year-round residential drinking water systems, such as mobile home parks, met Ontario's stringent health-based quality standards.
- **99.52** per cent of test results from systems serving designated facilities, such as schools and day nurseries or health centres in rural Ontario, met the health-based quality standards.

Inspection Results for Drinking Water Systems

Ministry staff annually inspect all municipal residential drinking water systems to ensure they meet the province's strict regulatory requirements. Overall, these systems continue to perform well, showing consistently excellent results.

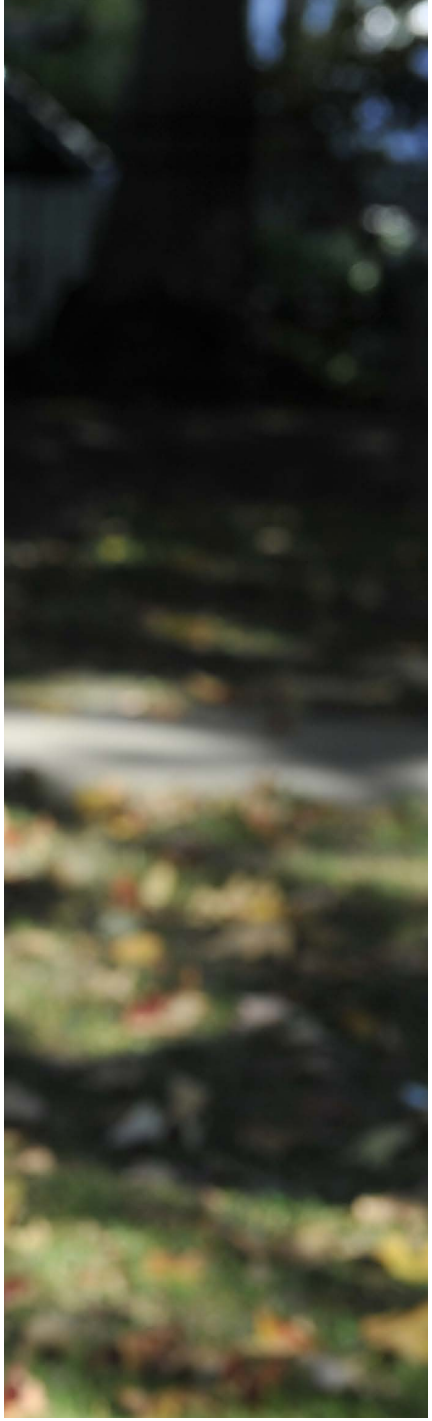
In 2011-12, we inspected 676 municipal residential drinking water systems in Ontario. Of these, 99.5 per cent achieved ratings greater than 80 per cent with 60 per cent receiving inspection ratings of 100 per cent.

Inspection Results for Laboratories that Test Drinking Water

Recently, our Chief Drinking Water Inspector reported there were 53 qualified and eligible laboratories that performed drinking water analysis for Ontario's regulated drinking water systems.

Because these laboratories play an important role in our safety net, ministry staff regularly inspect them to ensure they continue to be managed and operated in a manner that meets their licensing terms and Ontario's strict standards and regulations.

During the period covered in this report, ministry staff carried out 105 inspections of these qualified and eligible laboratories and they continue to meet Ontario's strict regulatory requirements.



DOOR-TO-DOOR TESTING – *What You Need to Know*

Health-based drinking water testing is strictly regulated in Ontario. Neither my ministry nor its agencies perform door-to-door testing of your tap water. Testing and analysis of Ontario's drinking water is carried out by qualified and eligible laboratories which report the results to my ministry. We inspect these laboratories regularly as part of our safety net.

In some Ontario communities, salespeople have been going door-to-door offering to test tap water using an electrical device. When this device is inserted into the water sample, it turns the sample brown, giving the false impression that the drinking water sample is not clean. This type of test cannot identify contamination that might result in illness but people who have this test performed are often urged to purchase a costly water treatment unit.

If you are approached by someone offering to test your drinking water, I would encourage you to contact your municipality or local health unit. They can answer any questions you may have about home-based water tests.

For more information on home-based water testing, contact the ministry directly by calling our Public Information Centre toll-free at **1-800-565-4923** or in the GTA at **416-325-4000**.

If you suspect fraud in connection with a home-based water test, contact your local police, or call the Ministry of Consumer Services toll-free at **1-800-889-9768** or in the GTA at **416-326-8800**.

Compliance and Enforcement Activities

Through regular inspections of our drinking water systems ministry staff ensure that owners and operators are complying with their legal and regulated obligations to provide safe and high quality drinking water to the public.

When necessary, they may issue an order or refer the matter to the ministry's Investigations and Enforcement Branch.

In 2011-12:

- Six orders were issued to six municipal residential drinking water systems and one additional order was issued to a municipal residential drinking water system as a result of an incident that occurred outside of a scheduled inspection.
- Eighteen orders were issued to 18 non-municipal year-round residential drinking water systems and systems serving designated facilities.
- During this period no orders were issued to drinking water systems operated by local services boards.
- There were 12 cases involving convictions at 13 regulated drinking water systems with fines totalling $94,000.

New Research and **Best** Science

Pharmaceuticals

My ministry is constantly working to find the best science available to protect your drinking water. Recent advancements in highly specialized analytical equipment have enabled us to detect even the smallest amount of pharmaceutical compounds in our water supplies.

In two separate research projects aimed at optimizing the water treatment process, ministry staff studied the effects of ozonation on five major pharmaceuticals frequently detected in water.

Our research results are promising. The studies showed that when ozone and hydrogen peroxide are combined at the right ratios, they are capable of breaking down these pharmaceutical compounds into small and degradable molecules. These studies also confirmed that by-products, which are normally formed during the ozonation process, were either not detected or were greatly reduced. More studies are needed to strengthen these results and to evaluate ozone's effectiveness on other emerging compounds.

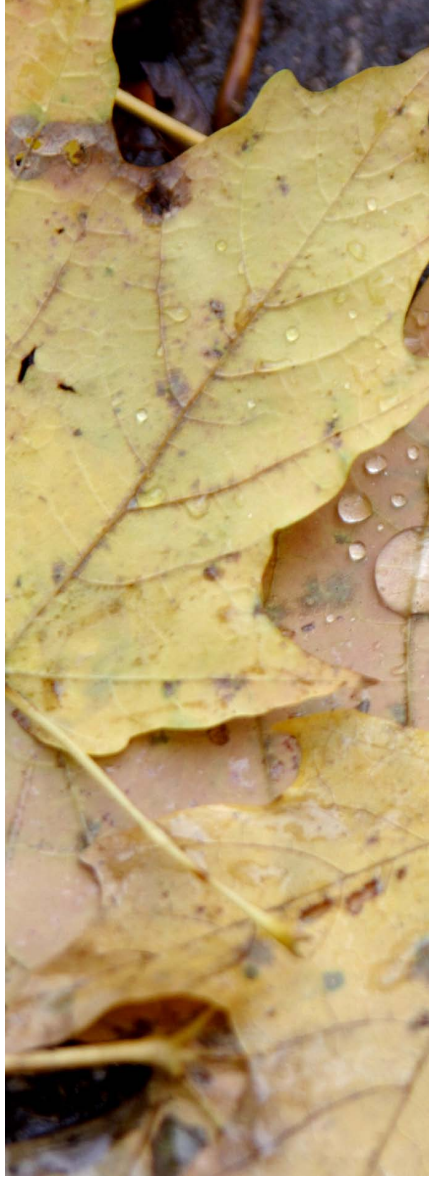
Perfluorinated Compounds

Perfluorinated compounds are a family of chemicals used to make products resistant to heat, oil, stains and grease. These compounds are found in many products such as non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics and firefighting foams.

Studies conducted in other jurisdictions showed the presence of these chemicals in their waters so Ministry of the Environment staff implemented projects to look for these chemicals in Ontario. The levels of these compounds were found to be extremely low.

The Ministry of the Environment's monitoring data on these compounds was used by Health Canada to develop new interim health-based guidelines for perfluorooctane sulfonate and perfluorooctanoic acid while they develop final guidelines for the most commonly detected perfluorinated compounds.

Broader **Water** Agenda



When we think about water resources in Ontario, we cannot place enough emphasis on how important the Great Lakes are to our health, our economy and our quality of life. Eighty per cent of North America's fresh water is contained in the Great Lakes. The Lakes appear resilient and eternal but they face a wide range of stressors such as population growth, climate change and invasive species. Managing such a large and valuable water resource is no easy task.

Protecting the Great Lakes involves many partners and programs. These have to fit and work together to ensure that Ontario, along with our partners, is making progress on Great Lakes protection.

Our partnerships range from working with community groups which are taking action in their corner of the Great Lakes to researchers who have Great Lakes expertise to share.

To further advance Great Lakes protection, Ontario re-introduced Bill 6, the proposed Great Lakes Protection Act, in February 2013. If passed, the act will provide new tools to enable us to restore and protect the Great Lakes.

For example, it would create a Great Lakes Guardians' Council to improve collaboration and identify priorities and partnerships. We would also be able to set targets to identify clear and measurable outcomes and, together with local partners, take appropriate actions to target a particular geographic area.

The act, if passed, will also help us to ensure that Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy is maintained and that its progress is monitored and reported to the public.

The proposed Great Lakes Protection Act is currently moving through the legislative process.

Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy

Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy is our first road map to guide future actions to protect the Great Lakes.

Released in December 2012, the strategy builds on engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders including Great Lakes experts, municipalities, agricultural and tourism sectors, local groups, First Nations and Métis communities.

The strategy is designed to focus provincial resources and enhance collaboration with other governments and the broader Great Lakes community so the Lakes continue to be drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

The strategy covers a diverse range of activities such as work to protect water quality and quantity and our efforts to support climate change adaptation. Actions in the strategy are designed to protect and restore the ecological health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin by advancing the following six goals:

1. Engaging and empowering communities
2. Protecting water for human and ecological health
3. Improving wetlands, beaches and coastal areas
4. Protecting habitats and species
5. Enhancing understanding and adaptation
6. Ensuring environmentally sustainable economic opportunities and innovation

CITY OF GUELPH H2O GO WATER FESTIVAL

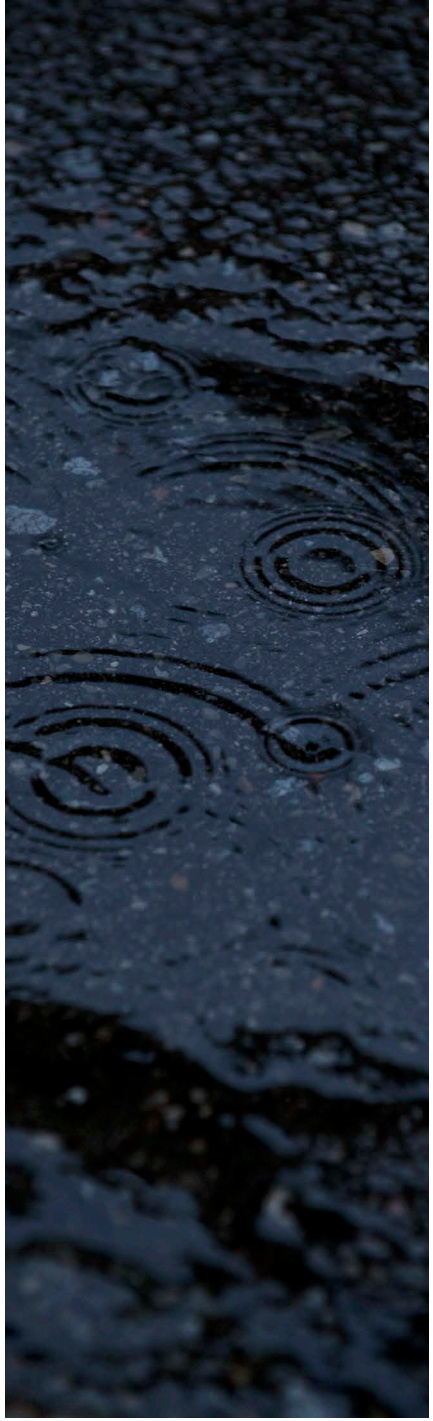
When it comes to conserving water and protecting our water resources, sharing and caring as a community is an ideal way to raise awareness of how water is a shared resource and worth every drop of our attention.

Guelph, unlike many municipalities in Ontario, relies on a finite groundwater source.

In March of 2013, the City of Guelph chose to celebrate Canada Water Week by partnering with the Ontario Centres of Excellence and the University of Guelph School of Engineering to host a special water festival. The “H2O GO Festival: An engaging celebration of water”, was a one-day event that entertained and educated the public about the importance of water conservation by focusing on the many simple ways to protect the local water supply.

Activities included interactive displays, information booths, children’s activities and an online forum for the sharing of ideas through art and science. Expert workshops were offered on greywater reuse, rainwater harvesting and efficient landscaping.

The City’s Canada Water Week programming also included “Water Wednesdays” hosted by the Guelph Public Library. This family-centred series, offered throughout March 2013, explored how Guelph gets its drinking water, the water cycle, water conservation and “Trout Unlimited” — Canada’s famous “Yellow Fish Road” program, a national conservation education initiative.



Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund

The Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund is helping communities take action to protect and restore their corner of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The first round of funding supported 80 projects, such as cleaning up a shoreline or restoring a wetland.

The second round of funding will see approximately 80 applicants awarded funds with announcements of successful recipients beginning in December 2013.

Drafting a New Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes

For more than four decades, my ministry and other Ontario ministries have worked with the federal government under the Canada-Ontario Agreement to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes. This collaboration, along with the efforts of the Great Lakes community and our implementation partners, has resulted in real progress being made toward solving some of the more difficult challenges facing the Lakes.

For example, under the agreement, we have been able to achieve significant reductions in the amount of toxic substances entering the Lakes. This improves the health of Great Lakes fish and birds while reducing the strain on our water treatment facilities.

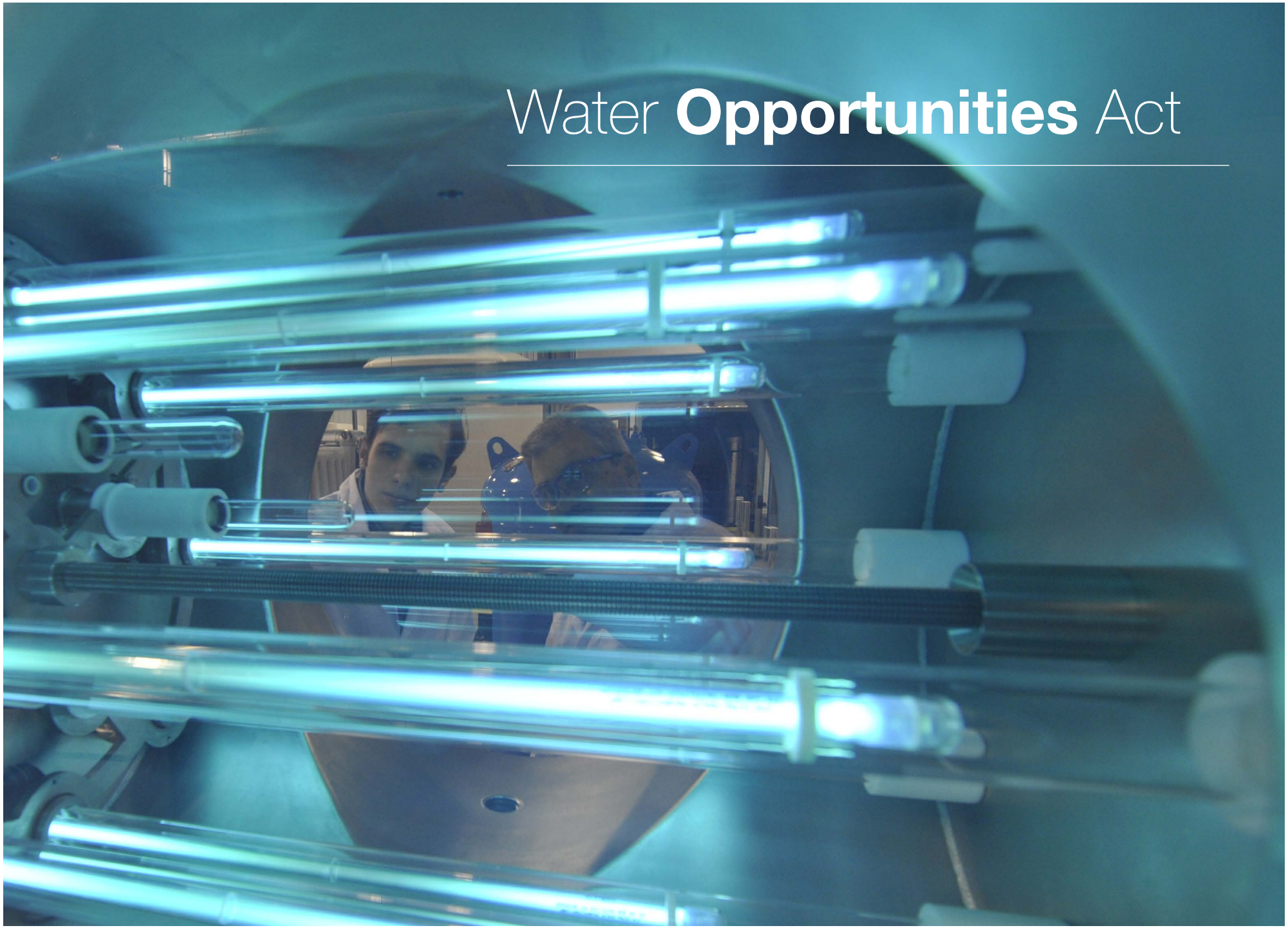
Within the Great Lakes basin, major sewage infrastructure improvements have been made and many critical habitats have been conserved. For example, in 2013-14, Ontario and its partners are helping to protect and restore over 12,000 hectares of wetlands, woodlands and other Great Lakes habitat.

Through the negotiation of a new Canada-Ontario Agreement, the province is seeking commitments to support its proposed Great Lakes Protection Act and Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy. Ontario is strongly committed to protecting Great Lakes water quality and ecosystems.

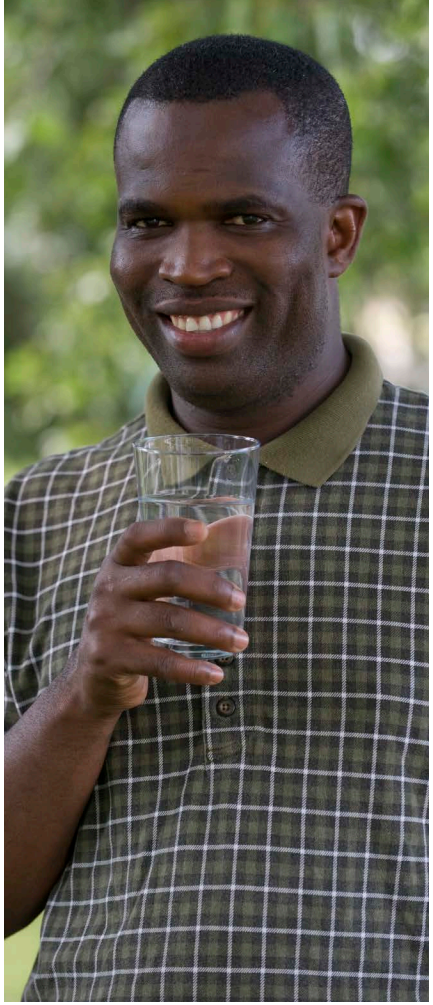
Stormwater Management

Several Ontario communities experienced flood damage this year, a reminder of the importance of stormwater management. Rainwater flowing through urban areas can carry unwanted nutrients and harmful pollutants into Ontario's ground and surface water. This can put a strain on water treatment facilities that clean and protect our drinking water.

Showcasing Water Innovation is the province's $17 million funding program for innovative water management approaches that help to reduce stormwater runoff. For example, the program is supporting the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's collaborative work with public and private sector partners to encourage low impact development approaches to manage stormwater and conserve water. In the near future, the conservation authority will publish guides to support municipalities in implementing best practices in stormwater management.



Water **Opportunities** Act



look for WaterSense Meets EPA Criteria

In this section, I am pleased to report on some of our achievements under the Water Opportunities Act. The act came into effect in 2010 and over the past three years, it has paved the way for us to advance Ontario's reputation as a continental leader in the $557 billion global water technology market.

The act is aimed at achieving three outcomes:

- Encouraging all Ontarians to use water more wisely.
- Promoting sustainable infrastructure and conservation planning using made-in-Ontario technologies.
- Creating more economic opportunities and jobs by making Ontario the North American leader in the development and sale of water technologies.

I would like to provide some details on our progress in each of these three areas.

Encouraging Ontarians to Use Water More Efficiently

The province adopted the WaterSense labelling program in 2012. The program helps Ontario families and businesses conserve water and save money by labelling water-efficient household products. A WaterSense label identifies faucets, showerheads, toilets and pre-rinse spray valves that use 20 per cent less water.

Using less water protects natural resources and reduces demand on water heaters, pumps and related facilities. Practicing water conservation also saves money on energy bills for individuals, businesses and municipalities.

Under the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, Ontario adopted water conservation goals and objectives that are consistent with those for the Great Lakes Basin.

These goals and objectives are designed to enhance long-term, sustainable water use practices and management. They will also help promote water conservation and efficiency, improve monitoring and data sharing among jurisdictions in the Great Lakes Basin and develop science and research as well as education and outreach that would help advance our water conservation efforts.

A number of the projects funded by the province's Showcasing Water Innovation program are developing innovative municipal approaches to use water more efficiently. For example, Greater Napanee Utilities is reducing wastage from leaking water pipes by lining water mains with an innovative synthetic barrier.

Ontario made changes in its 2012 Building Code to clarify and expand on the circumstances and rules for re-using rainwater as well as water from stormwater and greywater systems as a water supply for a variety of purposes. The changes in the Code will also improve water efficiency requirements for urinals, some toilets and residential showerheads. These amendments are expected to take effect January 1, 2014.

My ministry will continue promoting water conservation and efficiency, including promoting WaterSense labelling for water-efficient consumer products. We will also continue our work with stakeholders on potential water conservation plans by public agencies.

Visit **www.Ontario.ca** for water conservation tips to protect shorelines and beaches as well as water-saving tips for your lawn and garden, around your home and specifically for kids.

Strengthening Municipal Infrastructure Planning

The Municipal Infrastructure Strategy which was released in August 2012 builds on the key principles of Building Together, the province's long-term infrastructure plan.

My ministry will engage stakeholders in considering options for municipal water sustainability plans and performance indicators as well as developing tools for municipal water asset management that align with Building Together requirements.

The requirement for long-term asset management by municipalities is a cornerstone of the Municipal Infrastructure Strategy. Municipalities seeking provincial capital funding are required to demonstrate how their proposed project fits within a comprehensive asset management plan.

Through the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative, Ontario is providing nearly $90 million to address critical projects and up to $9 million to help municipalities prepare asset management plans.

Ontario is providing an additional $100 million through its Small, Rural and Northern Municipal Infrastructure Fund, for critical road, bridge, water and wastewater projects and to support the development and implementation of asset management plans in the smallest municipalities.

Steady progress has been made in assisting municipalities with long-term water infrastructure planning through capacity building, knowledge transfer and incentive funding.

Since its launch in April 2011, the Showcasing Water Innovation program has funded 32 projects with a value of nearly $50 million in Ontario's cities, towns and First Nations communities. The new technologies, services and approaches developed through these projects will help municipalities as they undertake sustainable municipal water infrastructure planning.

Innovative Water Management

The Water Opportunities Act enabled the establishment of the Water Technology Acceleration Project, better known as WaterTAP. WaterTAP supports research and commercialization of technologies in Ontario's water sector.

WaterTAP is a key component of the Water Opportunities Act. More than 300 members of Ontario's water community participated in WaterTAP's Innovation in Action forum held in February 2013. The event focused on ways to move from innovation to commercial application and was an opportunity to share big ideas for building a stronger Ontario.

In addition to my ministry's efforts to promote the local water industry, the Ontario Clean Water Agency is establishing relationships with a number of organizations within Ontario, across North America and around the world to share resources and develop opportunities for innovation and business partnerships that promote Ontario's water technologies to a broader market.

For example, the Ontario Clean Water Agency is assisting entrepreneurs to pilot their innovative products and services

TOWN OF MOOSONEE ADVANCED WATER METERING

According to an Environment Canada survey in 2009, Canadian municipalities which do not meter any households on their water system use an average of 65 per cent more water per person than municipalities which meter all households on their water system.

In Ontario, about 95 per cent of the population in single-family homes on municipal systems are metered.

The Town of Moosonee is one of the most recent municipalities in Ontario to install advanced water meters. This initiative has created an awareness among residents about water conservation and helped the town manage its water and wastewater systems more efficiently while saving on the cost of water treatment chemicals.

under real operating conditions. The Agency has also established relationships with Mekorot, the international water utility in Israel, to share best practices for operating water and wastewater facilities, and to promote Ontario products and services.

The Southern Ontario Water Consortium is creating a platform for turning water ideas into water innovations through research, development, testing and demonstration of technologies and solutions to water problems in real world environments. For more information, visit **sowc.ca**.

The Walkerton Clean Water Centre's Technology Demonstration Facility supports research to assess possible improvements for drinking water treatment processes. For more information on this topic, visit **www.wcwc.ca/en/research**.

THE CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE

Directing growth and sustainable development in Ontario requires more sophisticated methods of managing water. An important part of my ministry's mandate is optimizing the use of water while minimizing the impact of water use on the natural environment.

The Canadian Urban Institute has partnered with the Ontario cities of Guelph, London, Barrie, and Hamilton as well as Environics Analytics to develop an integrated water mapping project. The project is exploring how large urban centres can use existing data to better manage municipal water systems, improve water conservation programs, enhance customer communications and develop more accurate guidelines for future land use and water system planning.

By bringing these pieces of the water puzzle together, water service providers can look at how demand varies with the type of residence or business, age of the structure and land area.

A better understanding of local demands on water resources and usage allows for more accurate water planning and helps ensure an adequate supply of clean water is always available.

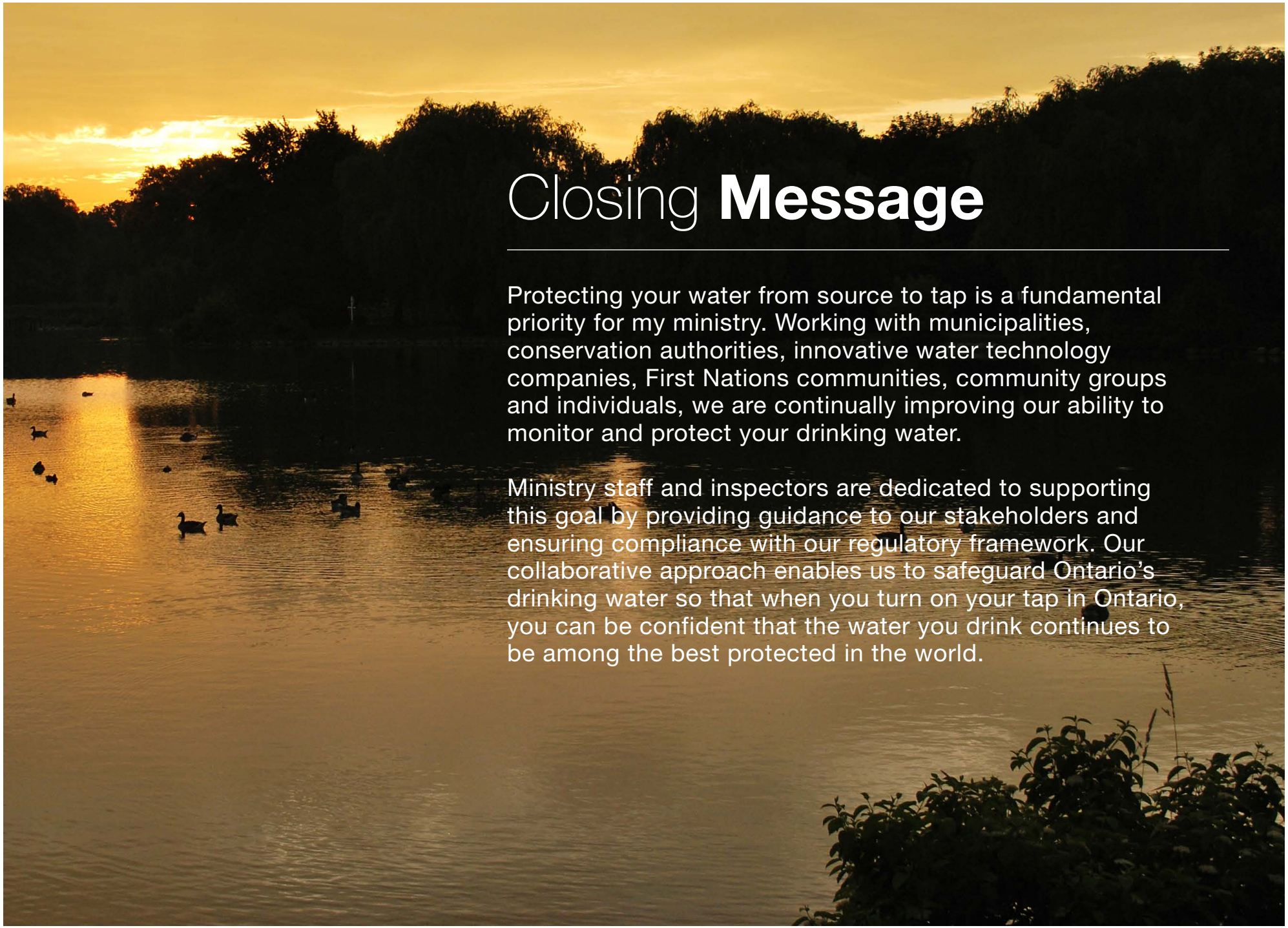
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT'S AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

The Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence recognizes outstanding achievement, leadership and innovation in environmental protection.

The 2011 and 2012 awards focused on water protection and conservation. The Steam Whistle Brewing Company, Summerhill Impact and Pine River Watershed Initiative Network were three of the recipients:

Minister's Award for
Environmental Excellence

- **Steam Whistle Brewing**, an independent brewery located in Toronto, has installed a new brewhouse to incorporate technologies that have greatly reduced the company's environmental footprint. As a result of this initiative, Steam Whistle Brewing now uses about 4,500,000 fewer litres of water, minimizing the amount of sewage/wastewater produced every year. The brewhouse also decreases energy consumption by capturing and recovering energy from the steam released during the brewing process and using it to generate all the hot water needed for brewing, bottling, canning, kegging and cleaning.
- **Summerhill Impact** is a national not-for-profit organization that developed the first mercury recovery program in Canada. Mercury is a highly toxic substance commonly found in vehicles produced prior to 2003. If not properly contained and disposed of, mercury has the potential to harm air, water and the health of ecosystems. "Switch Out", the award-winning program, developed by Summerhill Impact, collects, recovers, and properly manages mercury switches found in hundreds of thousands of retired vehicles.
- The local Bruce County landowners who form the **Pine River Watershed Initiative Network** are helping to prevent erosion and keep soil, manure and bacteria out of the Pine River. Working together with landowners, local municipalities, conservation authorities, governments and others, the group has carried out projects to build habitat and improve water quality. Since 2006, the group and its collaborators have reforested 20 kilometres of stream bank by planting more than 200,000 native trees and installed nine kilometres of fencing to keep cattle out of the water. Every action to protect the Pine River watershed also benefits Lake Huron.



Closing **Message**

Protecting your water from source to tap is a fundamental priority for my ministry. Working with municipalities, conservation authorities, innovative water technology companies, First Nations communities, community groups and individuals, we are continually improving our ability to monitor and protect your drinking water.

Ministry staff and inspectors are dedicated to supporting this goal by providing guidance to our stakeholders and ensuring compliance with our regulatory framework. Our collaborative approach enables us to safeguard Ontario's drinking water so that when you turn on your tap in Ontario, you can be confident that the water you drink continues to be among the best protected in the world.

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